

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Frederick Dorchak on 8-30-10.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Cancel claims 15-23

Claims 3-11, and 13-14 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The prior art such as Seth et al (US 2004/0110021) teaches forming sliding elements comprising a first coating formed from a matrix material further comprising a hard and/or soft phases. The prior art also teaches applying second and/or outer supporting coating layers on the first coating such as overlay layers is known. However the prior art of Seth does not disclose the first coating comprising a solid solution or bond formed between a phase element and a matrix material and only in a region of the phase boundary of the matrix further wherein the coating is able to embed pieces abraded from parts.

The prior art of Tanaka et al (US 6,066,191) teaches forming sliding elements comprising a first coating formed from a matrix material further comprising a hard phases which form a solid solution with the matrix. However, Tanaka is silent as to forming an outer supporting coating layer or that the first coating is able to embed pieces abraded from parts.

As such, the prior art of record does not teach or suggest forming the bearing element combination as claimed and further comprising a supporting layer on a first coating element, wherein said first coating comprises a solid solution or bond formed between a phase element and a matrix material and only in a region of the phase boundary of the matrix further wherein the coating is able to embed pieces abraded from parts to be supported.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JASON L. SAVAGE whose telephone number is (571)272-1542. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 6:30-4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jennifer McNeil can be reached on 571-272-1540. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Jason Savage/
Examiner
8-27-10

/Jennifer C. McNeil/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1784